Sheryl P. Walter Declassified/Released US Department of State EO Systematic Review 20 Mar 2014

Message Text

SECRET

PAGE 01 PRETOR 05190 01 OF 02 051214Z
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TO SECSTATE WASHDC NIACT IMMEDIATE 2395

S E C R E T SECTION 1 OF 2 PRETORIA 5190

NODIS CHEROKEE

FROM LOW

S/S: PLEASE LIMIT DISTRIBUTION STRICTLY TO THE SECRETARY,
DICK MOOSE AND THOSE THEY MAY DESIGNATE.

E.O. 11652: XGDS-1
TAGS: PDEV, PINT, RH, UK
SUBJECT: RHODESIA: REVIEW OF THE SITUATION WITH JOINT
OPERATIONS COMMANDER PETER WALLS

1. SUMMARY: IN A LONG, FRANK CONVERSATION WITH
GRAHAM AND ME, PETER WALLS EXPRESSED HIS DISTRUST OF
SMITH AND FEAR THAT SMITH WOULD NOW REVERT TO A
COMPLETELY WHITE GOVERNMENT. WE DISCUSSED MILITARY
PROVISIONS OF THE ANGLO AMERICAN PROPOSAL. WALLS
REFERRED TO GRAHAM'S DISCUSSION WITH FLOWER NOTING
THAT THE SUBJECT OF BRITISH RESUMPTION OF AUTHORITY IN
RHODESIA WOULD BE DISCUSSED BY THE JOINT OPERATIONS
COMMAND ON WEDNESDAY AND ASKING FOR THE BRITISH REACTION.
I HOPE THAT WE CAN ENCOURAGE THE BRITISH,
NOT TO BE TOO NEGATIVE IN THEIR RESPONSE
TO FLOWER AND WALLS. SEE COMMENT. END SUMMARY

2. ONE OF THE FIRST TO ACCEPT GRAHAMS AND MY REQUEST
FOR A MEETING ON OUR RETURN TO SALISBURY MONDAY,
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SECRET

PAGE 02 PRETOR 05190 01 OF 02 051214Z

SEPTEMBER 4, WAS JOINT OPERATIONS COMMANDER, PETER
WALLS. OUR HOUR LONG CONVERSATION WAS SURPRISING
FOR ITS FRANKNESS. WALLS MADE IT CLEAR THAT HE WAS
NOT SUPPOSED TO BE MEETING WITH US OR DISCUSSING
MILITARY OR POLITICAL MATTERS AS HE WAS NOW DOING.

3. WALLS REFLECTED A DEEP FEELING OF DISCOURAGEMENT

Sheryl P. Walter Declassified/Released US Department of State EO Systematic Review 20 Mar 2014

Sheryl P. Walter Declassified/Released US Department of State EO Systematic Review 20 Mar 2014

OVER THE PRESENT STATE OF AFFAIRS. HE AGREED THAT
THERE WAS NO PROSPECT OF AN EARLY MEETING OF ALL
PARTIES AND THE BEST THING TO DO FOR THE TIME BEING
WAS "TO LET THE DUST SETTLE." BUT HE ALSO EXPRESSED
CONCERN THAT THE UK-US NOT DRAW BACK AND LET THE SITUATION
DETERIORATE.HE WAS FEARFUL THAT SMITH WOULD USE THE
RECENT EVENTS TO WITHDRAW FROM ALL ATTEMPTS TO FIND
A SETTLEMENT BY NEGOTIATION WITH AFRICAN NATIONALISTS,
DROP THE MARCH 3RD AGREEMENT, AND RESORT TO AN ALL OUT
MILITARY CONFLICT. "WE'RE NOT GOING BACK TO SQUARE
ONE" (MARCH 3RD), HE SAID, BUT INTO THE MINUS ZONE"
(PREVIOUS TO THAT, WITH A PURELY WHITE GOVERNMENT).
THIS SAID WALLS WAS NO SOLUTION.

4. THIS LED US TO A DISCUSSION OF THE ANGLO AMERICAN
PROPOSAL. SPEAKING FRANKLY HE SAID IT WAS THE MILITARY
ASPECTS OF THE PROPOSAL THAT GAVE HIM THE GREATEST
DIFFICULTY. HE READILY AGREED THAT THEY HAD NOT BEEN
CAREFULLY STUDIED BUT WERE REJECTED OUT OF HAND WHEN THEY WERE
DESCRIBED AS A DEMAND "TO DISMANTLE" THE DFENSE FORCES.
WHEN WE REVIEWED THE BROAD OUTLINES OF LORD CARVER'S
MILITARY PLAN HE ALSO AGREED THAT ANY SETTLEMENT WOULD
HAVE TO INVOLVE SOMETHING ALONG THE LINES WE WERE
DESCRIBING. WE EXPRESSED OUR DISAPPOINTMENT THAT WE
HAD NEVER BEEN ABLE TO GET INTO A DISCUSSION OF THE
PROPOSAL AND HE AGAIN INDICATED THAT THE WRAPS HAD BEEN
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SECRET

PUT ON HIM IN TERMS OF ANY MENTION OF THE SUBJECT WITH
US. WE SUGGESTED THAT HE GO BACK AND LOOK AT IT AGAIN.
JOHN GRAHAM IS REQUESTING AUTHORITY TO GIVE HIM A COPY
OF OUR DETAILED PAPER OF IT. (WE HAVE NEVER PASSED A
WRITTEN DISCRIPTION OF LORD CARVER'S PLAN TO ANY OF
THE PARTIES.)

5. WALLS SAID HE ASSUMED WE UNDERSTOOD THAT HE HIM-
SELF HAD NO PERSONAL AMBITION TO SERVE ONE DAY AFTER
THE JOINT OPERATIONS COMMAND IS DISSOLVED. WE ACKNOW-
LEDGED THIS AND SAID WE FELT THAT THE CHANGES WHICH
WE HAVE SUGGESTED FOR A NUMBER OF SENIOR POSITIONS
WERE NOT A REFLECTION ON THE INCUMBENTS BUT RATHER
SYMBOLIC OF THE CHANGE WHICH NEEDED TO BE DEMONSTRATED.
THIS WAS TRUE FOR INSTANCE OF THE CHIEF OF POLICE.
WE DID NOT KNOW ALLUM AND WE ARE PREPARED TO ACCEPT HIS
REPORTEDLY HIGH PROFESSIONAL QUALITIES. THE FACT
REMAINED THAT IF WE WERE TO ARGUE FOR MAINTAINING LAW
AND ORDER DURING THE TRANSITION PERIOD IN THE HANDS OF
THE EXISTING POLICE FORCE, AS A MINIMUM THE CHIEF WOULD
HAVE TO BE REPLACED. WALLS PICKED UP THE POINT AND
EXPLAINED TO US HOW DIFFICULT THIS WAS ON THE

Sheryl P. Walter Declassified/Released US Department of State EO Systematic Review 20 Mar 2014

Sheryl P. Walter Declassified/Released US Department of State EO Systematic Review 20 Mar 2014

MORALE OF THE PROFESSIONAL POLICE AND THE DEFENSE FORCES. THE CHIEF AFTER ALL WAS A PROFESSIONAL AND SHOULD REMAIN AS OTHERS. WE TRIED TO MAKE CLEAR TO HIM HOW IMPOSSIBLE THIS WOULD BE IF A SETTLEMENT WAS TO BE ACHIEVED AND I BELIEVE MADE SOME IMPRESSION UPON HIM.

6. EARLY IN THE CONVERSATION WALLS BROUGHT UP "THE MESSAGE" WHICH SECURITY CHIEF, KEN FLOWER, HAD GIVEN JOHN GRAHAM LAST WEEK (THE SUBSTANCE OF THIS "MESSAGE", ABOUT BRITISH WILLINGNESS TO RESUME AUTHORITY IN RHODESIA, IS CONTAINED IN A PAPER WHICH I GAVE TO DICK MOOSE IN NAIROBI. IT HAS NOT BEEN TRANSMITTED IN ANY OF MY MESSAGES). WITHOUT REPEATING FLOWER'S TORY, WALLS CONFIRMED THE REPORT AS I UNDERSTAND IT. HE

SECRET

SECRET

PAGE 04 PRETOR 05190 01 OF 02 051214Z

MADE NO ATTMEPT TO DISGUISE HIS ANGER AT THE WAY THE JOC HAD BEEN TREATED AND HE ADDED THAT IN A SUBSEQUENT PRIVATE MEETING WITH SMITH HE HAD EXPRESSED HIS VIEWS FRANKLY. HE HAD TOLD SMITH THAT EITHER HE, THE PRIME MINISTER, WAS LYING OR "A COUPLE" OF HIS MINISTERS WERE. (ABOUT HAVING BEEN UNAWARE OF THE MINISTERIAL DECISION TO TAKE STRONG ACTION AGAINST THE PATRIOTIC FRONT, ITS INTERNAL PARTIES AND SUPPORTING NEWSPAPER). WALLS ADDED THAT IN HIS OWN OPINION IT WAS SMITH WHO WAS LYING. WALLS SAID THAT HE HAD NOT EXPECTED THE SUBJECT OF RESUMPTION OF BRITISH AUTHORITY TO BE BROUGHT UP AT THE JOC MEETING AND REPEATED FLOWER'S STATEMENT THAT THE SUGGESTION TO STUDY IT CAME FROM A TOTALLY UNEXPECTED SOURCE (YARDLY). HE SAID THAT THE JOC WANTED TO DISCUSS IT WITHOUT SECRETARIES OR NOTES, THOROUGHLY AND FULLY, AND THEY WERE PLANNING TO DO SO ON WEDNESDAY MORING (SEPT. 6). HE ASKED GRAHAM IF THERE WAS ANY REACTION TO

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PAGE 01 PRETOR 05190 02 OF 02 060840Z
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Sheryl P. Walter Declassified/Released US Department of State EO Systematic Review 20 Mar 2014

Sheryl P. Walter Declassified/Released US Department of State EO Systematic Review 20 Mar 2014

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S E C R E T SECTION 2 OF 2 PRETORIA 5190

NODIS CHEROKEE

FROM LOW

S/S: PLEASE LIMIT DISTRIBUTION STRICTLY TO THE SECRETARY, DICK MOOSE AND THOSE THEY MAY DESIGNATE.

FLOWER'S QUESTION. GRAHAM, NOTING THAT I WAS AWARE OF THE SUBSTANCE OF CONVERSATION, ANSWERED THAT THOULO HER DID NOT HAVE A FINAL REPLY HE COULD SAY, AFTER HIS DISCUSSION WITH FOREIGN SECRETARY OWEN IN NAIROBI, THAT IT WOULD HAVE TO BE ENTIRELY CLEAR THAT THE BRITISH WOULD NOT AGREE TO TAKE ON THE RESPONSIBILITY OF FIGHTING A WARE AGAINST A QUARTER OR A THIRD OF THE POPULATION BEFORE THEY WOULD BE WILLING TO CONSIDER THE MATTER. ARRANGEMENTS WOULD HAVE TO BE MADE SO THAT THE WAR STOPPED IF THEY WERE TO ACCEPT.

7. COMMENT: AS DICK MOOSE AND I REPORTED FROM NAIROBI EVENTS OF LAST WEEKEND MAKE IT LESS LIKELY THAT A NEGOTIATED SOLUTION FOR AN ALL PARTIES MEETING AND AN AGREED SETTLEMENT ARE POSSIBLE. THE DISARRAY CAUSED BY SITHOLE'S ANNOUNCEMENT IS BECOMING MORE AND MORE EVIDENT. THE BITTER DIFFERENCES WHICH EMERGED IN LUSAKA BETWEEN NYERERE, SUPORTED BY MACHEL, AND NKOMO, AND THE RECRIMINATIONS HERE IN SALISBURY BETWEEN THE PARTIES, RENDER FURTHER NEGOTIATIONS OUT
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OF THE QUESTION FOR THE TIME BEING. IF SMITH DOES DECIDE TTO MOVE, AS WALLS FEARS, TO RENOUNCE HIS AGREEMENTS AND EFFORTS AT NEGOTIATED SETTLEMENT AND RESUME FULL SCALE MILITARY CONFRONTATION I BELIEVE THERE IS A GOOD POSSIBILITY OF A MOVE IN ONE FORM OR ANOTHER TO INVITE BRITISH TO RESUME AUTHORITY IN RHODESIA.

8. GRAHAM HAS TOLD ME (AND THIS SHOULD BE KEPT IN UTMOST CONFIDENCE) THAT DAVID OWEN SUPPORTED HIS OWN VIEWS THAT BRITAIN COULD NOT REJECT OUTRIGHT AN APPEAL TO IT TO RESUME AUTHORITY AS THE LAWYERS AND OFFICIALS OF THE FOREIGN OFFICE HAD RECOMMENDED. FURTHERMORE OWEN AND GRAHAM'S VIEWS ARE SUPPORTED BY PRIME MINISTER CALLAHAN INCLUDING THE POSSIBILITY OF THE USE OF ONE OR TWO BATTALIONS OF BRITISH TROOPS

Sheryl P. Walter Declassified/Released US Department of State EO Systematic Review 20 Mar 2014

Sheryl P. Walter Declassified/Released US Department of State EO Systematic Review 20 Mar 2014

AS THE NUCLEUS OF A FORCE WHICH HAD THE SANCTION
AND SUPPORT OF THE UN.

9. IN MY VIEW THE WAY THE BRITISH RESPOND TO THE
FLOWER-WALLS OVERTURE IS OF CRUCIAL IMPORTANCE.
THEY ARE QUITE RIGHT IN WANTING TO RESPOND FRANKLY AND
RELISTICALLY AND IN MAKING IT CLEAR FROM THE BEGINNING
THAT THEY HAVE NO INTENTION OF INHERITING THE WAR. ON
THE OTHER HAND IF THEY ARE TOO NEGATIVE AND PLACE TOO
MANY CONDITIONS ON THEIR RESPONSE THEY WILL DISCOURAGE
WHAT MAY BE ONE OF THE LAST REMAINING HOPES TO RESOLVE
THE RHODESIAN SITUATION WITHOUT A PROTRACTED WAR. I
BELIEVE THAT DAVID OWEN WAS ON THE RIGHT TRACK IN SAYING
TO US THAT HE WOULD INSIST ON PRIOR FRONT LINE AGREE-
MENT BEFORE ACCEPTING ANY INVITATION FOR RESUMPTION OF
AUTHORITY (MOOSE LOW NAIROBI TEL) AND IT IS MY HOPE
THAT WHEN HE CONSULTS WITH YOU, AS HE UNDOUBTEDLY WILL,
YOU CAN ENCOURAGE HIM TO PROCEED CAUTIOUSLY BUT NOT
SECRET

SECRET

PAGE 03 PRETOR 05190 02 OF 02 060840Z

TOO NEGATIVELY IN THE RESPONSE THAT HE GIVES TO FLOWER
AND WALLS.

10. SINCE WRITING THE ABOVE I LEARNED THAT YOU HAVE
BEEN IN TOUCH WITH OWEN ON THIS SUBJECT AND I HAVE
SEEN THE SPEAKING NOTE TIVEN JOHN GRAHAM TO USE IN
RESPONSE TO FLOWER. (PLEASE DO NOT MENTION THIS FACT
TO OWEN). AS NOW DRAFTED IT TELLS THE JOC THAT IF
AUTHORITY IS TURNED OVER TO THE UK, IT WILL SEEK
ACCOMMODATION WITH THE PF. NO QUALIFICATION IS MADE
ABOUT THE BASIS FOR SUCH ACCOMMODATION, SUCH AS "BASED
ON THE ANGLO AMERICAN PROPOSAL AS MODIFIED." I BELIEVE
THAT THE JOC IS VERY SERIOUS IN THIS PROPOSAL (THOUGH I
CONFESS TO BEING PUZZLED WHY THEY WOULD MAKE IT FOUR
WEEKS BEFORE A BRITISH ELECTION IS EXPECTED). THEY
KNOW WHAT THEY ARE OFFERING AND WILL PUT GREAT WEIGHT
ON THE REPLY. I BELIEVE THAT THE ANSWER SENT FOR
DELIVERY WILL EFFECTIVELY DISCOURAGE THEM FROM PROCEEDING
WITH THEIR PROPOSAL. JOHN GRAHAM IS APPEALING HIS
INSTRUCTIONS. I REALIZE THAT IN THE FINAL ANALYSIS THIS
IS A MATTER THE BRITISH ALONE WILL HAVE TO DECIDE.
NEVERTHELESS I HOPE YOU CAN FIND A WAY TO GO BACK TO
THE BRITISH TO ENCOURAGE THEM TO STRENGTHEN THE SECOND
PARAGRAPH OF THEIR INSTRUCTION AT LEAST TO QUALIFY THE
ACCOMMODATION THEY WOULD SEEK IN TERMS OF THE AAP.
EDMONDSON

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